

The Grapevine

NEWSLETTER OF GRACE LUTHERAN CHURCH, NALC

Our Mission: "Sharing God's Love Through Grace"

JULY 2023

BLESSED IS
THE NATION
WHOSE
GOD IS
THE LORD.

PSALM 33:12



"I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me bear much fruit..."

Grace Lutheran Church



Office: 740/246-6576 Web: www.gracethornville.org

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Worship: Sundays 8:00 and 10:30a.m.

Our Staff

Pastor:	Tom Jacobson 740-242-2192
Office Manager:	Beth Gilgien 740-398-4502
Organist:	Sue Ellen Simmons 740-605-1530
Choir Director:	Diane Christensen 740-215-2396
Handbell Choir:	Becky Winegardner 740-467-3164
Men of Grace:	John Ulmer 740-281-7672
Church Council President:	Paul Moentmann 440-728-7067
Council Vice President:	Matt Sheridan 740-405-6873
Council Secretary:	Carl Lahman 614-329-8639
Director of Inreach:	Linda Keaser 740-403-4197
Director of Outreach:	Vicki Jones 740-403-7311
Director of Upreach:	Casey Sigler 740-279-5405
Financial Secretary:	Jackie Combs 740-246-4751
Treasurer:	Rick Rockwell 740-624-2241
Bd of Women President:	Cherl Haggenjos 740-342-2276
Safety/Security Team:	Bob Reynolds 630-698-0457
Sacristan:	Meg O'Reilly 740-644-3504
Facilities:	Carl Lahman 614-329-8639

Please call the church office with regard to any of the following:
*Hospitalizations; Baptisms; Confirmation; Weddings;
First Communion; Spiritual Counseling; Prayer Concerns*

“Enemies”

But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:44-45 ESV (Monthly Watchword for July 2023)



Sometimes, things we read in the Bible are, shall we say, hard pills to swallow. God's Word is often like that in the way it confronts our sinful nature. These words of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount from the Gospel of Matthew are not just a hard pill to swallow. For me, they are like one of those giant horse pills that children and even many adults dread having to choke down.

These words are also thought provoking. I've read the entire Gospel of Matthew many times, but it wasn't until I sat down to write this article that I really reflected on this passage deeply.

Jesus speaks about "enemies." The first question I asked in my reflection was simply this: "Do I actually have any enemies?" To be sure, there are people with whom I disagree about things, and vice versa. There are many people I have met in life who are not, for various reasons, my close and personal friends. I suspect I am not alone in this. But I honestly had a hard time thinking of anyone I would classify in such a harsh way. How does someone qualify as our enemy? For what reason is someone our enemy? Is it a personal reason, or does it have to do with our faith? Jesus' words are relevant in either case, but it seems Jesus' comments are directed primarily to loving and praying for those who persecute Christians because of their faith. It was not uncommon for Christians to face such opposition, and Jesus' words speak to that reality.

In our time and part of the world, perhaps we have the luxury of not having such enemies, at least less often than other lands where Christian persecution is still common. For all that we observe about the declining influence of the Christian faith in our country, we still live in an area that is for the most part friendly to our faith, where we enjoy considerable freedom compared to other places. It is important to remember that disagreement does not necessarily equal hatred or persecution. Ralph Waldo Emerson once made the insightful comment: "Let me never fall into the vulgar mistake of dreaming that I am persecuted whenever I am contradicted."

But persecution against us can still unfortunately come our way. We might have people with whom we disagree, where such disagreements erupt even into hatred. We might encounter people who for whatever reason are opposed to us because of our faith in Jesus and our Christian life. How do we respond?

Christian faith comes with a cost. This is one of the paradoxes of our faith. On the one hand, our new life with God is a free gift of grace. We can't take credit for the new birth into a living hope we have through Jesus Christ. But on the other, having that faith also leads us into a new way of life, one that necessarily makes us uncomfortable with the world around us in light of the will of God. This includes everything, including how we relate to those around us.

When we are wronged by others, a mark of our sinful nature is the desire for revenge or at least what we call "schadenfreude," from the German words for "joy at the misfortune of others."

But Christian faith changes our outlook on ourselves and the rest of the world. We know that we have received grace from God, love that we do not deserve. And that leads us to look at others differently. As hard a pill as it is to swallow, God's love is for the whole world, even those opposed to us. And we do not

know how God is working in their lives. The Apostle Paul, for example, was the strongest opponent of early Christians, but God turned him in the other direction.

For these reasons, Jesus calls us to a posture of prayer when we are opposed. It is important to remember that love and prayer for others does not excuse harmful behavior. There is much that we can't control about what others might do. But we can control how we respond to it. It is a mark of our faith in our gracious God that we offer prayer for those who persecute us, that they might know the same grace we have received.

With prayer for our continued Christian witness,

Thomas E. Jacobson

Pr. Tom Jacobson

+Church Council Meeting Minutes for June are not available, and will be included in the next *Gracevine*.



Shirley Ann Smith
November 11, 1933 - May 30, 2023

Worship In July

Sundays 8:00 and 10:30am
Holy Communion Celebrated Every Sunday

Sunday, July 2 - Independence Sunday

8am - Worship at Grace

10:30am - Community Worship at Thornville Park

Jeremiah 28:5-9

Psalm 89:1-4, 15-18

Romans 6:12-23

Matthew 10:40-42

Sunday, July 9 - Pentecost 6

Zechariah 9:9-12

Psalm 145:8-14

Romans 7:15-25a

Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

Sunday, July 16 - Pentecost 7

Isaiah 55:10-13

Psalm 65:1-13

Romans 8:1-11

Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

Sunday, July 23 - Pentecost 8

Isaiah 44:6-8

Psalm 86:11-17

Romans 8:12-25

Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43

Sunday, July 30 - Pentecost 9

1 Kings 3:5-12

Psalm 119:129-136

Romans 8:26-39

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52



May's Vital Signs
Average Worship Attendance - 138
8:00am - 35 10:30am - 103

☆ "Celebrate Freedom" ☆



Sunday, July 2, 2023

Worship at Grace at 8:00am

Holy Communion will be celebrated.

Community Worship Service at 10:30am

at the Jake Shaner (Thornville) Park

Holy Communion will be celebrated.

Please bring your own lawn chairs.

Tuesday, July 4, 2023

Parade steps off at 11am

Activities at Jake Shaner Park include a bounce house, music, fun, fellowship.

Pet Show at 1pm

Square Dancing from 2-6pm



Facilities Report – Carl Lahman (Facilities Coordinator)

A Facilities "Coordinator" means relying on others to get things done. Fortunately, at Grace Lutheran, there are people willing to give of their time and talents for the care and maintenance of both the church and parsonage. This month's report illustrates the many volunteers who helped accomplish the following list of accomplishments:

• **More storage space for Backpack Ministry**

- Scott Schultz and Bob Reynolds built extra wooden shelves in two of the closets in the Fellowship Hall. The Backpack Ministry now has 4 closets to store food and supplies.
- Kate Simmons and Beth Gilgien rearranged and organized the closets.
- Kelly O'Reilly and Pete Oberhauser moved two "heavy" solid wood doors, that were stored in one of the closets, to the room next to the balcony.
- The extra storage space will allow more food to be stored on site; plus, the food bags will take up less room on tables.

• **Reorganized Quilt Closet**

- Linda Keaser, Beth Raab, Kate Simmons, Diane Christensen, Jeni Lahman, Becky Winegardner and Casey Sigler all worked on this project.

• **Tree Trimming/Removal** (hired Broken Limb Tree Service)

- Silver maple and blue spruce removed (with stump grinding) from front of parsonage garage
- Sugar maple trimmed in backyard of parsonage
- Four crab apple tree stumps ground up on north side of parsonage
- Sugar maple trimmed in front of church (north side)
- Rick Rockwell removed silver maple wood chips in front of parsonage garage.

• **New washer/dryer**

- Wanda and Terry Hupp researched options.

- After VBS, Jonathan Roshon will install washer box, drain and waterlines for new washing machine. Core hole thru block wall for dryer vent, install vent cover and seal.
- **Second floor shower**
 - Discovered a water leak from second floor shower into Fellowship Hall.
 - Jonathan Roshon resealed the shower drain and will also caulk around the base pan.
 - Replaced damaged ceiling panel with a new one.
- **New patio sliding screen door for parsonage**
 - Bob Reynolds purchased and installed screen door
- **Library**
 - Karen Lewis, Valinda Arnold and Jeni Lahman continued to sort through and categorize books.
- **Lawn Care/Flower beds**
 - John Ulmer applied step 2 of Scotts 4 step fertilizer program on church lawn.
 - Terry and Wanda Hupp treated weeds, planted a Hosta, and mulched flower bed on east side of church.
 - Plans are to remove some old stumps and add more mulch to addition flower beds on east side.
- **Items for NALC Disaster Response**
 - Items are now stored in Carl Lahman's garage in order to keep them separate from the sales items in August. Kaye Smith is checking to see when the NALC in this area is having another "Stuff the Truck" event.
- **Lawn Care Billing**
 - Discovered a problem with receiving invoices the past two months. Company resolved the issue.
- **Dartball Board in Fellowship Hall**
 - Jim Lewis and Bob Reynolds modified the dartball board so it can be moved out of the Fellowship Hall when not in use.
- **Ordered a sign** to be put next to dumpster, indicating DUMPSTER NOT FOR PUBLIC USE. Will also be marking the pavement in front of dumpster with wording DO NOT BLOCK.

- **Future projects**
 - Clean carpet in Fellowship Hall after VBS. [This is part of the annual cleaning schedule.]
 - Continue painting project of third floor classrooms.
 - Have received an estimate to remove the blue spruce and white pine on the east side of the parsonage fence alongside the library exit driveway. One is dying and the other has grown into and around either a power or utility line. Both trees are in danger of causing damage in case of high wind.
 - The pastor and family have expressed interest in installing an egress window in the basement bedroom at some point in the future. This is because the room is not currently a legal bedroom for insurance purposes. An egress window would make escape from the bedroom possible in the event of a fire. In the future, the children might benefit from each having separate rooms, and this would make that possible and legal.
 - Remove the old kitchen cabinet in the hallway and replace it with another metal shelf for kitchen supplies.
 - Looking into putting an outside water spigot on the north side of church for watering flowers and new grass seed.
 - Build a soffit around the PVC pipes with drywall, located from the basement furnace room to the west side exit door, then reinstall the exit sign.
- **Looking for volunteers to help with:**
 - Power washing fence at parsonage
 - In the fall, add top soil to the church's lawn and reseed in areas.
- **Church donations announcement**
 - Please check with church office before dropping off donations. Donations are always appreciated but because of limited storage space there may not be room or a need for a particular donation. For the church rummage sale, donations may be dropped off in the church basement (Noah's Club). Please mark "rummage sale".



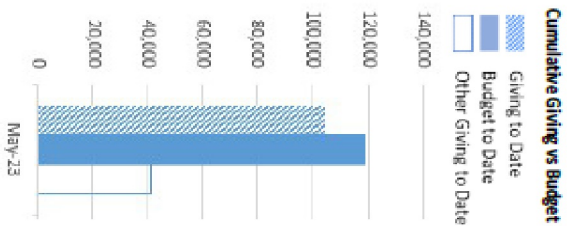
✧ This year's VBS was out of this world!! ✧

Thanks to all who helped make Vacation Bible School such a huge success! Grace Lutheran Church was the host accompanied by Thornville Methodist Church, Trinity UCC, and South Shore Ministries. The theme was STELLAR and focused on *Shine Jesus' Light*. An average of 118 kids from pre-school through elementary were taught about Jesus' love shining on them and how they, as followers, can use their lives to provide "light" to others. Music, crafts, stories, dramas, and snacks were enjoyed at several stations led by 29 leaders and 19 assistants. There was also a security team of six persons. An offering was taken each day of money and groceries that is shared with Community Food Pantries at Thornville, Glenford, Somerset, and the Backpack Ministry. Over two trash bags of pop tabs were collected for the Ronald McDonald House at Children's Hospital. A great time for fun and fellowship was enjoyed by the children and the volunteers.



Grace Lutheran Church - Thornville OH
Consolidated Fund Activity Report for May 2023
Tuesday, June 13, 2023

Account #	Account Name	Beg Balance	Receipts	Disbursements	Transfers/FC's	End Balance
3,100,000	General Fund	98,667	26,031	21,908	0	102,791
3,220,000	Improvement Fund	13,427	100	267	0	13,260
3,300,000	Mission Fund	14,711	2,188	5,454	0	11,444
3,320,000	Local Good Samaritan Fund	3,414	20	0	0	3,434
3,400,000	Endowment Osma CD	10,000	0	0	0	10,000
3,400,100	Endowment Fund	28,532	0	0	0	28,532
3,420,000	Capital Campaign Fund	18,759	20	0	0	18,779
3,500,000	Adventures In Faith Fund	505	0	180	0	325
3,510,000	Varner Scholarship Fund	3,213	635	0	0	3,848
3,520,000	Library Fund	108	0	0	0	108
3,600,000	Parment Fund	1,017	0	0	0	1,017
3,610,000	Handball Fund	63	0	0	0	63
3,620,000	Flower Fund	532	0	0	0	532
3,630,000	Chair Fund	2,328	0	0	0	2,328
3,740,000	Backpack Ministry Fund	21,381	510	1,177	0	20,713
3,900,000	Memorial Fund	18,269	825	0	0	19,094
3,920,000	KFC Youth Fund	8,690	0	268	0	8,422
3,925,000	KFRQGS Fund	8,988	0	0	0	8,988
	Total	252,605	30,329	29,254	0	253,679



General Fund Budget	Net
22,057	0
3,974	4,123
via Actuals	







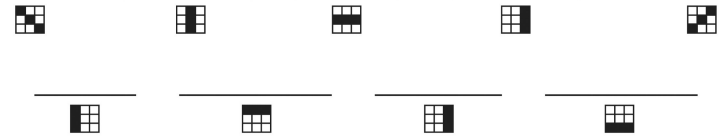
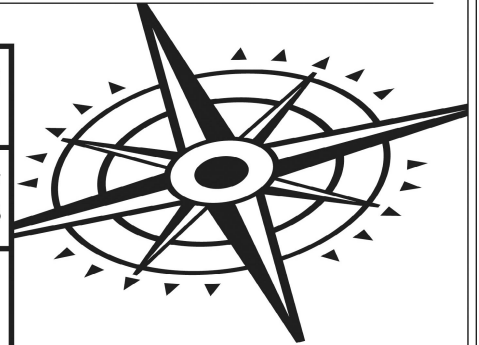
PUZZLE

SEPARATION FROM SIN

David praises God for his love and compassion.
What does God do for people who fear him?

Directions: Using each grid pattern marked below, find the word that appears in all three of those squares. Write the words in the spaces below to complete Psalm 103:12, NIV.

FROM as is can	NORTH from far	at the EAST FROM
is South AS	do far EAST	the THIS up AS
WEST THAT is East	far down WEST	THE be AS West



... so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

PSALM 103:12, NIV

Answer: As far as the east is from the west

Grace Lutheran Church
Thornville, Ohio

Purpose

To invite All to discover, live and share God's gift of new life through Jesus Christ.

Mission Statement

Sharing God's Love through Grace.

Vision

We Are A Community Developing Faithful Followers Of Jesus By Experiencing God's Grace Through Friendship, Spiritual Growth and Service.

Core Values

1. That the Gospel calls us to unconditional regard for all people.
2. That Prayer is necessary for our relationship with God, one another, and the world.
3. That Scripture provides the foundation for our lives of faith.
4. That the authority for our ministry is founded in Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, which is the Body of Christ on earth. An elected Parish Council provides administrative authority; our called pastor(s) provides the spiritual authority of the Office of Word and Sacrament Ministry.
5. That each member is uniquely gifted by God for ministry and is expected to mature in discipleship of Jesus Christ.
6. That any ministry based on our Purpose, Mission, Vision and Core Values is valid for our congregation, and may, at any time, evolve or end.

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